

## **State Accreditation Committee Meeting**

### **Minutes**

**Thursday, May 21, 2015**

The Nebraska State Accreditation Committee met at the NCSA Building, 455 S. 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln. Vice Chair Travis Miller called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and declared a quorum present and established the legality of the meeting.

Members present were the following: Dale Fornander, Brian Gegg, Dale Hafer, Pat Hoehner, Jed Johnston, ReNae Kehrberg, Mitch Kubicek, Freida Lange, Troy Lurz, Travis Miller, Gerry Osborn, Msgr. Perkinton, Kevin Riley, Joe'l Ruybalid, and Amy Shane.

Members not in attendance were Elizabeth Boyle, Josie Floyd, Abby Freeman, Kyle McGowan, Mike Sieh, Mark Skillstad, and Jane Stavem.

NDE staff members present during all or some of the meeting were the following: Commissioner Matt Blomstedt, Brian Halstead, Donlynn Rice, Jeremy Heneger, Matt Heusman, Russ Masco, Sue Anderson, Aprille Phillips, Jolene Palmer, Cory Epler, Don Loseke, Rick Moses, and Dennis McGuire.

Following greetings and introductions, Travis Miller reviewed the agenda. Dale Fornander moved to approve the agenda, and Pat Hoehner seconded the motion.

Voting yes: Dale Fornander, Brian Gegg, Dale Hafer, Pat Hoehner, Jed Johnston, ReNae Kehrberg, Mitch Kubicek, Freida Lange, Troy Lurz, Travis Miller, Gerry Osborn, Msgr. Perkinton, Joe'l Ruybalid, and Amy Shane.

Voting no: none

Approval carried 14-0 with 8 absent.

Members reviewed the minutes of the January 16, 2015 meeting. Gerry Osborn moved to accept the minutes as presented, and Mitch Kubicek seconded the motion.

Voting yes: Dale Fornander, Brian Gegg, Dale Hafer, Pat Hoehner, Jed Johnston, ReNae Kehrberg, Mitch Kubicek, Freida Lange, Troy Lurz, Travis Miller, Gerry Osborn, Msgr. Perkinton, Joe'l Ruybalid, and Amy Shane.

Voting no: None

Approval carried 14-0 with 8 absent.

### **Thoughts and Objectives for the Day**

Freida Lange reviewed with members the purpose and direction of the committee's responsibility. She stressed that the committee is a group representing a wide variety of schools and personnel throughout

the state, and this diversity helps provide clear prioritization of what will best serve the Nebraska students today and tomorrow.

### **2015 Legislation & Implications for Rule 10**

Brian Halstead shared that two bills have a modest impact on accreditation. The first bill is LB 525 that had its final reading on the day of the accreditation meeting. This bill will change the five year review of state standards to seven in order to more closely align with Nebraska districts' practices for review of local standards. Additionally, this bill will add one more duty to the state school security director's position, and that is developing a curriculum for bullying. The second bill is LB 511, which has been adopted, and will provide a model for return to learning for pediatric cancer students.

### **Rule 10 and Current Status**

Freida Lange reminded members that a review of the proposed changes to Rule 10 had occurred at the January meeting. She reported that the new rule has been approved by the attorney general's office and is presently in the governor's office awaiting his final approval.

### **Classification of Schools (AQuESTT)**

Jeremy Heneger provided members a handout of the classification components of AQuESTT that outlined the four steps to determine how every public school building and district will be assigned one of four classification levels: excellent, great, good, and needs improvement. He noted for members that the state board and NDE personnel are still developing the rules for the roll-out of the system. He shared that the students to be included would be those who had been enrolled for a full academic year. The system will take into account the school's status, improvement, growth, change in non-proficient supergroup, participation rate, and graduation rate for high schools.

### **Priority School Designation (AQuESTT)**

Sue Anderson told members that the state board continues to examine the state task force's model and that the hope is for finalization by August. She noted that once the schools are classified in the Needs Improvement category the next duty will be to determine what three schools will be designated as priority schools. She emphasized that priority means those in most need of improvement to affect student achievement. Dr. Anderson shared that the state board has been engaged since last October determining what measures and metrics should be used. In compliance with statute, she said that intervention teams will assist the three priority schools in developing progress plans to identify strategies and resources that will help the schools better provide for the academic success of students.

### **Model of Continuous Improvement and Connections (AQuESTT)**

Aprille Phillips and Matt Heusman jointly reported on the importance of continuous school improvement in all facets of the Nebraska Department of Education. Both made the connection between AQuESTT and the necessity to integrate the concepts embedded in the AQuESTT tenets in all school improvement efforts from the department to ESUs to all schools.

## **Rural and Small Schools Challenges**

Rick Moses reviewed the section of Rule 10 that does not allow interscholastic competition practice during physical education in the middle school. He noted that a number of small schools are in violation of this part of Rule 10. He offered for members some ideas that he has provided these small schools so that they would be in compliance with the rule and still not have to have the practices for seventh and eighth graders after school. Dale Hafer then shared with members what special circumstances small schools face that makes this section of Rule 10 especially difficult to meet. He noted such things as limited facilities, travel distances, student participation, and staffing dilemmas. As a follow-up to this presentation, the working lunch provided members an opportunity to discuss the challenges faced by small, rural schools, and recommendations both pro and con related to this part of Rule 10.

## **Message from the Commissioner**

Dr. Blomstedt reported to the committee his rationale for the May 11, 2015, memo to superintendents reminding them of a number of state statutes relating to Americanism in the schools as well as employee pledges. He noted that there is a need for revisiting these statutes and engaging in meaningful dialogue in order to update the content in a more relevant nature. Additionally, he shared with members how he intends the role of NDE to be one of support for the schools in order to promote what is best for students. His overall intent is to make sure the culture of NDE is one where the lines of communication are open to constantly improve our efforts to serve the students in Nebraska.

## **Action on Accreditation of Schools**

Dale Hafer moved to recommend for continued accreditation the 245 Class II through V School Districts, the five Special Purpose Schools, and the 68 Nonpublic Schools. Dale Fornander seconded the motion.

Voting yes: Dale Fornander, Brian Gegg, Dale Hafer, Pat Hoehner, Jed Johnston, ReNae Kehrberg, Mitch Kubicek, Freida Lange, Troy Lurz, Travis Miller, Gerry Osborn, Msgr. Perkinton, Kevin Riley, Joe'l Ruybalid, and Amy Shane.

Voting no: None

Motion carried 15-0 with 7 absent.

ReNae Kehrberg moved to recommend for initial accreditation for the 2015-2016 School Year 12 schools in the Archdiocese of Omaha. Troy Lurz seconded the motion.

Voting yes: Dale Fornander, Brian Gegg, Dale Hafer, Pat Hoehner, Jed Johnston, ReNae Kehrberg, Mitch Kubicek, Freida Lange, Troy Lurz, Travis Miller, Gerry Osborn, Msgr. Perkinton, Kevin Riley, Joe'l Ruybalid, Amy Shane.

Motion carried 15-0 with 7 absent.

## **Transitions**

Donlynn Rice reported that effective June 1, 2015, she will assume the duties leading educator effectiveness, specifically working with the Nebraska pilot schools with teacher/principal frameworks and additional schools that choose to implement the modified Danielson or Marzano teacher evaluation processes and procedures. Assuming the duties of Nebraska Department of Education Curriculum Administrator will be Dr. Cory Epler, who has been a part of the curriculum team for a number of years, working specifically with college and career readiness initiatives.

## **School Security**

Jolene Palmer outlined the seven pivotal responsibilities of her role as the state safety director for safe and secure schools. Dr. Palmer first discussed her leadership role and support for safety and security. She described the efforts that she has expended since beginning this role in September 2014. She shared that she had a state committee composed of a cross section of not only educators but law enforcement, architects, fire personnel, and a host of other experts familiar with school security operations. Since one of her responsibilities is to conduct assessment of security of each public school by August 2017, she has solicited the assistance of six law related professionals who will have the training to assist in this undertaking. She emphasized that initially the efforts will be gathering data to inform future operations. Members were interested in her descriptions of a common response protocol and language so that students, no matter what school they are in, would know what security directives meant as far as actions they should pursue. She also discussed the suicide prevention professional development that will begin for all school personnel who interact with students. Additionally, Dr. Palmer reported what would be the appropriate times for schools to conduct tornado and fire drills. Finally she noted that her role now includes overseeing concussions. She provided members informative handouts on bullying and suicide prevention information.

## **School Improvement**

Dennis McGuire shared with participants the dates and locations for the five school improvement workshops that are planned for next Fall. He also noted the emphasis of the first day of the workshops will be on the two major domains of AQuESTT with day two having five breakout sessions. He also shared the two AdvancED Lead Evaluator trainings with members and encouraged them to participate.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30.